



## **Office of the Mayor**

### **NEW RELEASE**

**Friday, June 8, 2007**

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### **South Bend Wastewater Treatment Plant Applauded for Excellence**

The City of South Bend congratulates its Wastewater Treatment Plant Team for winning 1<sup>st</sup> Place overall at the 2007 State Wastewater Challenge competition and 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the Residuals Competition, which was recently held in Seymour, Indiana. The city team includes Jill Norton, Jeff Sieradzki, Patrick Henthorn and Ken Smith. South Bend wastewater teams won the overall Championship in 2001, 2002, and 2003.

“The continued success of South Bend’s Wastewater Treatment Plant staff in the annual Challenge competition, speaks to the commitment of the department to deliver the highest quality of service to the residents of South Bend,” said Mayor Luecke. “Our Wastewater Treatment Plant employees continually strive to use the best management tools, safety practices and processes available for compliance and improvement of performance standards.”

The Wastewater Challenge was started in 1986 in an effort to bring Wastewater employees together for educational competition and fun. Teams of four people from across the state, spend one hour at five different challenging events. The five discipline events include Residuals, Safety, Lab, Operation & Maintenance, and Collection System. Wastewater professional teams are not told until the day of the events, what to expect from the hands-on and written experiments that test skills acquired through training and day-to-day activities.

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Jack Dillon, Director of Environmental Services, stated “I am extremely proud of our Wastewater Treatment Plant Team. These awards acknowledge the professionalism of our staff, as they go about the task of safeguarding the city’s water, while preserving the St. Joseph River as the important community asset that it is.”

Last year, South Bend celebrated the Wastewater Treatment Plant’s fifty years of operation, since it’s inception in 1956, and was also the host site of the Challenge competition tournament, placing third in the overall competition. Since the 1990’s, over \$87 million has been invested in the Wastewater Treatment Plant and last year the city launched a 10-year, Clean River-Healthy Neighborhoods Plan that will eliminate chronic sewage backups into basements and continue to improve sewage collection and treatment capabilities. The 10-year plan will also reduce raw sewage overflow volume by 38 percent in a typical year.

The Plant treated a total of 11.559 billion gallons of wastewater in 2006, which converts to an average daily flow of 31.67 million gallons per day, meeting the permit conditions and water quality standards of the new National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, which then allows the Plant to discharge treated wastewater into the St. Joseph River.

Additionally, Jill Norton and Michelle Smith, both chemists with the Environmental Services Laboratory Team obtained their Class IV and D wastewater certifications, the highest certifications offered in Indiana.